REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are currently pending in the application. By the amendment claims 1 and 8 are amended for the Examiner's consideration. The above amendments do not add new matter to the application and are fully supported by the specification. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending objections and rejections for the reasons discussed below.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejection

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,317,722 issued to JACOBI et al. ("JACOBI"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

.   Applicants submit that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejection is improper because JACOBI does not disclose every element of the claimed invention.

Independent claim 1 recites, in pertinent part:

> computing a plurality of similarity factors based on at least one advisee profile from at least one newly rated item and determining which at least one user has already rated the item, wherein the advisee profile for a recommendation system comprises a plurality of records, each record including a user identifier, an item identifier, and a rating value, such that each record is linked in a first and a second dimension; and generating a recommendation of at least one item of the selected item list, according to the previously provided ratings of the at least one item by the neighboring users.

Independent claim 7 recites, in pertinent part:

> each record including a user identifier, an item identifier, and a rating value, wherein each record is linked in a first and a second dimension, the first dimension linking records with a same user identifier in a sequence according to the item identifier, and the second dimension linking records with a same item identifier in a sequence according to the user identifier."

Independent claim 8 recites, in pertinent part:

> receiving a recommendation request comprising a selected item list from
> the advisee for the recommendation by a recommendation system; in
> response to the recommendation request, computing a plurality of
> similarity factors based on at least one advisee profile from at least one
> newly rated item and determining which at least one user has already
> rated the item, and
> generating a recommendation of at least one item from the selected item list
> based on ratings provided by each neighboring user.

In rejecting, for example, independent claim 1, the Examiner acknowledged that

JACOBI does not disclose "identical terminology" used in the claims. However, the

Examiner explained that "it would be obvious to one or ordinary skill in the art to adapt

the invention in Jacobi for the uses in the instant invention in order to facilitate sales."

As a preliminary matter, Applicants submit that such assertions of obviousness

are not applicable in a § 102 rejection. Furthermore, the Examiner is not correct that

JACOBI discloses each and every feature recited in the above-noted claims.

Claim 1

For example, whereas claim 1 recites a plurality of users of the recommendation

system which have previously provided ratings of items from the selected item list and

uses, among other things, a rating value, JACOBI specifically explains that "[a]n

important benefit of the service is that the recommendations are generated without the

need for the user, or any other users, to rate items" (see col. 2, lines 37-39). Applicants

direct the Examiner's attention to col. 14, lines 46-48 which states:

> The Instant Recommendations service generates the recommendations based
> exclusively on the purchase history and any item ratings profile of the particular
> user.

Thus, JACOBI does not disclose or suggest, for example, a plurality of users of

the recommendation system which have previously provided ratings of items from the

selected item list. Nor has the Examiner shown otherwise.

The Examiner is also incorrect that JACOBI discloses generating a

recommendation of at least one item of the selected item list, according to the

previously provided ratings of the at least one item by the neighboring users as recited

in claim 1. As explained above, JACOBI is concerned, if at all, with the ratings of the

user. There is no disclosure in JACOBI indicating that previously provided ratings of

the at least one item by the neighboring users are utilized in the disclosed

recommendation system. Nor has the Examiner shown otherwise.

<u>Claim 7</u>

The features of claim 7 also are not disclosed or suggested by JACOBI.

Whereas claim 7 recites that each record is linked in a first and a second dimension,

the first dimension linking records with a same user identifier in a sequence according

to the item identifier, and the second dimension linking records with a same item

identifier in a sequence according to the user identifier, the Examiner has failed to

specifically identify any language in JACOBI which discloses or suggest these features.

For example, while the Examiner has identified col. 9, line 58 to col. 10, line 10 of

JACOBI as disclosing these features, the cited language merely states the following:

> Each similar items list 64 consists of the N (e.g., 20) items which, based on
> correlations between purchases of items, are deemed to be the most closely
> related to the respective popular item 62. Each item in the similar items list 64 is
> stored together with a commonality index ("CI") value which indicates the
> relatedness of that item to the popular item 62, based on sales of the respective
> items. A relatively high commonality index for a pair of items ITEM A and ITEM B
> indicates that a relatively large percentage of users who bought ITEM A also
> bought ITEM B (and vice versa). A relatively low commonality index for ITEM A
> and ITEM B indicates that a relatively small percentage of the users who bought
> ITEM A also bought ITEM B (and vice versa). As described below, the similar

items lists are generated, for each popular item, by selecting the N other items that have the highest commonality index values. Using this method, ITEM A may be included in ITEM B's similar items list even though ITEM B in not present in ITEM A's similar items list.

Such language is hardly suggestive of each record being linked in a first and a second dimension, the first dimension linking records with a same user identifier in a sequence according to the item identifier, and the second dimension linking records with a same item identifier in a sequence according to the user identifier.

Claim 8

Applicants also disagree that the features of claim 8 are disclosed or suggested by JACOBI. Whereas claim 8 recites generating a recommendation of at least one item from the selected item list based on ratings provided by each neighboring user, the Examiner has failed to specifically identify any language in JACOBI which discloses or suggest these features. For example, while the Examiner has identified certain language on columns 2-4 of JACOBI as disclosing these features, the most relevant portion of cited language merely states the following:

> Two specific implementations of the service are disclosed, both of which generate personal recommendations using the same type of table. In the first implementation, the recommendations are based on the items that have recently been rated or purchased by the user. In the second implementation, the recommendations are based on the current shopping cart contents of the user.

Again, while such language suggests that the system takes into account the ratings of a user, it clearly does not generate a recommendation of at least one item from the selected item list based on ratings provided by each neighboring user. Nor has the Examiner shown otherwise.

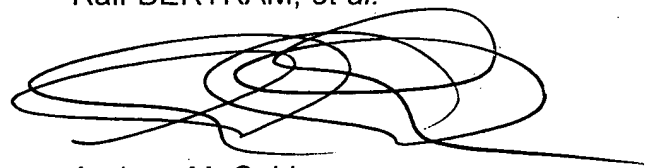Accordingly, claims 1, 7 and 8 are believed to be distinguishable over JACOBI

and are in condition for allowance. Furthermore, claims 2-6 and 9-14 are allowable at least because they depend from claims 1 and 8.

Because claims 1, 7 and 8 each recite at least one element not disclosed, or even suggested, by JACOBI, Applicants submit that the instant rejection of claims 1-14 should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all of the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed. Applicants hereby make a written conditional petition for extension of time, if required. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Deposit Account No.09-0457.

Respectfully submitted,
Ralf BERTRAM, *et al.*

Andrew M. Calderon
Registration No. 38,093

November 21, 2005
Greenblum & Bernstein, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, Virginia 20191
Telephone: 703-716-1191
Facsimile: 703-716-1180